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Arts Program Is Eyed for R.I.

4-Point Plan Outlined By Advisory Council, Would Cost \$117,000

A comprehensive plan for the support and encouragement of the arts in Rhode Island for the next fiscal year was outlined yesterday by the state's Advisory Council for the Cultural Arts.

The four-point program, which would cost \$117,000, must have General Assembly approval of a \$67,000 supplementary budget request for the state Department of Education, and the council must qualify for \$50,000 of federal matching funds under the National Endowment for the Arts.

The appropriation request already has been sent to Governor Chafee, who is expected to introduce it in the legislature.

The four major areas of the program are:

- Establishment of a program providing \$30,000 in financial assistance to local nonprofit groups that sponsor professional performances and exhibits in their communities.
- Creation of a \$35,000 program giving financial assistance for free or low-cost performances and exhibits by local cultural organizations.
- Support of research and development projects to solve problems common to the entire cultural community. A provision of \$25,000 is set aside for this purpose.
- Establishment of a \$10,000 program of technical assistance for local amateur organizations. Barnet Fain, chairman of the seven-member advisory council appointed by Governor Chafee last October, said the purpose of the technical assistance program is to increase interest and participation in the arts by providing amateur theatrical, music, dance and other artistic groups with occasional professional assistance from out-of-state.

The remaining \$17,000 will be used for administration by the division on cultural arts. The division was created by the General Assembly last year under the Department of Education with William P. Robinson Jr., state education commissioner, as its titular head. It will not be independently staffed until the program is implemented.

Representatives of fine arts groups have been invited to a meeting Tuesday at 8 p.m. in the Journal Auditorium to learn about guidelines on applications for support. At that time, application forms for aid will be distributed. Applications must be filed by April 7.